

YES

Catch

me

in a softened moment

and you have

me

trapped

the lust spelled in your eyes

trembles

my

belly

into

a miniature

volcano

toss

me

your weekend passion

and you have

me

welded

to your escapeless fingers

smelling

your

wild

perfume

relinquishing my paternity of thought

exchanging

it

for papal

eyeshuttedness

re

babies

born

in

wedless

darkness

leave
me
to amuse myself

and you'll have
me
chasing

the sin of you through shadows

crowding
time
into
corners
forcing
love
along
sewers
thrusting
sex
down
rainpipes

you may retire from the interlude
with minute scars
to remind

you
of
a
passion
that blazed
only instantly

but
I
must live
with persistent embers

I envy your peace
how fine
to turn
to new diversions
and
overcome
my ghostly whispering
with a glass of wine

my bleaching of joint memories
requires

the cauterizing bite
of heated steel
to sterilize
my heart
whole
again

yes
I say

you win

give
me
the glass

yes
take
what's left

that you'd like
to keep

YES

--Ottone M. Riccio

OLD BOOK SHOP

Squeezed (boldly)
between used cars
(BIG BIG DEALS)
and a barber shop
(English as she is spoke)
is a gray frog of a place
where on (knotty) pine boards
books books books books
sulk (some in sets)
and wait for sticky fingers
And a new sign pleads

SMOKERS

PLEASE USE ASH TRAYS
which has just been installed
by the goateed management
who pads about like a seal
in worn carpet slippers
and busily re-stacks
National Geographics.

--David Pearson Etter